

Where exceptional families thrive

Issue 145
May 2022

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What's In This Issue?

We'd like to start off our May issue by thanking everyone who supported us by joining Evening of Elegance on April 30, sharing the event with friends, liking our posts on social media, donating items to our silent auction, and or volunteering their time. The night was a great success, and the funds raised will help us continue to support families in Waterloo Region!

This issue of Family Pulse features a ton of new webinars, spring and summer programs, a new support group for adults with Aspergers, and so much more for our families, caregivers, and self-advocates!

Wishing you a wonderful May and start to one of the most beautiful seasons.

WE'RE ON LINKEDIN!



Support WRFN

Waterloo Region Family Network
www.wrfn.info
info@wrfn.info
519.886.9150

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Region District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update **Submitted by Carmen Sutherland, WRFN SEAC Representative**

The meeting began with a presentation for Autism Awareness Month. A key component was a student presentation on myths and facts about autism.

There was also a discussion about the budget. One issue brought up was recruiting Educational Assistants and Child and Youth Workers. We discussed whether a letter could be sent to the Ministry about a pay raise. The budget for some categories of staff members has become permanent. These include Social Workers and System Navigators, which is allowing families to connect better with both the schools and our communities. There was also a discussion about the Right to Read report, and how the Board plans to focus on teaching phonics and phonological awareness. There will be embedded reading Resource Teachers as well. There were also discussions of supporting the reading journeys of ACE students.

Summer learning was discussed as well. There will be Summer Learning for grades Kindergarten to Grade 3 and Grades 4 to 6 (some will be in-person and some will be hybrid) and Summer School for Grades 7-12 online. For the Reach Ahead program for students going from Grade 8 to 9, the students will receive one Grade 9 credit at the end of the summer. Some ACE students will have Summer School with smaller class sizes, but this is definitely a gap.

There was some discussion of PPM 81, particularly regarding who would train staff in procedures.

There was also a discussion of how Black and Indigenous students are over-represented in special education, how the Board does not do a good job of looking at their assets, but the Board is trying to shift its practices, and IEPs have decreased in the primary grades.

The next meeting will be May 11, 2022.

SEAC Updates

Waterloo Catholic District School Board - Special Education Advisory Committee Update **Submitted by Sue Simpson & Karen Applebee**

WCDSB SEAC met virtually on April 6, 2022.

Kristy McDonnell, Special Education Department Head at St. Mary's High School and Julia Horgan, Special Education Department Head at Resurrection Catholic Secondary School shared a presentation on Community Connections – an experiential learning program designed for students on the Community Living and ACTIVE pathways. This program is designed to prepare students for transition after high school through a layering of opportunities.

Retired Superintendents, Laura Shoemaker and Maria Ivankovic, joined us to present on the Right to Read Report. The Right to Read inquiry, which focused on early reading skills, found that Ontario's public education system is failing students with reading disabilities (such as dyslexia) and many others, by not using evidence-based approaches to teach them to read. The Right to Read inquiry report highlights how learning to read is not a privilege but a basic and essential human right.

PRO Grant – SEAC will be hosting a virtual workshop by Paul Davis on Internet Safety on May 12. We also discussed ideas for use of remaining grant funds.

Association updates were shared.

Trustees Bill Conway and Tracey Weiler shared updates from the Board of Trustees. Updates can be found here. <https://www.wcdsb.ca/wcdsb-board-meeting-bulletin-march-2022/>

The next WCDSB SEAC meeting will be held on May 18, 2022.

Everyone Is REALLY Awesome

Cristina Stanger, Self-Advocacy Liaison

Sometimes you come across a product that speaks to you. I really like the “Everyone is Awesome” Lego® set (40516) for the messages of inclusion and diversity it represents. I purchased it as a shared-activity for my children that would facilitate discussions about race, sexual orientation, and gender identity. My seven-year-old built the wall, my four-year-old assembled the people, and we engaged in important conversations. I chalked it up to a win.



But as we built it, I kept feeling like the idea could have gone farther. There was a clear lack of disability representation, and that seemed to me like a missed opportunity. After all, it is said that nearly a third of all people will experience disability at some point in their lifetime. So I determined that at least 4 of the 11 figures needed a visible exceptionality (although in reality many are invisible, like mine). I started wondering if I could modify my set to be more inclusive of those with exceptionalities, in addition to the marginalized groups already being celebrated.

It wasn't long before I was pouring over Lego® sets online looking for accessories I could incorporate. Some sets did have one or two disability-related pieces, but I wanted to take the idea farther, so I settled on ordering piece-meal through eBay. Seeing how many different exceptionalities I could represent with the 11 figures was a fun challenge. And thus, my little passion project was born. #EveryonesREALLYAwesome.

You may have seen some of these images on our WRFN media feeds already, and I would like to walk you through the modifications I made and my logic behind them:



You'll notice that I did not change the background at all as these coloured stripes carry strong meaning for the communities they represent, and they are well understood within society as a whole.

I rearranged the components of the figures, because after all, we are not one dimensional, and some people will identify with more than one of the represented groups. I did, however, keep the hand and face components paired together to be more in keeping with race representation.



I spread the figures out, because I needed to create physical space for the tools and support needs of those with disabilities. In a way, it is also a metaphorical space for our exceptional needs which are so often overlooked or ignored. I felt this “flying geese” formation generated a nice sense of community as well.

In the end I modified eight of the 11 figures.

- Service dog - visual impairment, hearing impairment, emotional support needs, etc.
- Backpack - medical equipment, homelessness
- Hat with visor and ear protection - sensory sensitivities, autism
- Wheelchair - physical disability
- Helmet - personal safety needs
- Tablet - augmentative communication device
- Hand removed - congenital difference, amputation
- Cane - visual impairment, physical disability



And I like to think that the remaining three figures have invisible exceptionalities such as Tourette’s Syndrome, ADHD, schizophrenia, or chronic pain.

And here is the end result:



As a person with invisible exceptionalities, I am still on the lookout for signs of inclusion and representation in businesses and organizations. If they welcome and support other under represented groups, they will likely welcome and support my neurodivergent self as well. Waterloo Region Family Network plans to display this customized set in our new office in the near future, so please check it out the next time you visit!

You are seen. You are valued.

What's Happening at WRFN

All WRFN programs will be offered in virtual format or through phone and email connections until further notice. At WRFN, we're here to listen. Please reach out and let us know how we can help you and your family during these challenging times.



A NEW CHAPTER

This group is for family members & caregivers interested in preparing for the future of their youth/adult family member with a lifelong disability.

We have a new feature to our meetings called "Ask Us Anything" from 9-9:30pm. This is a chance for those who attend the meeting to ask questions or clarify points when the main part of the meeting is over.

Join our Facebook group called A New Chapter – parent and caregiver connections.



May 3, 2022

Microboards: Basic Facts and Family Experiences

June 7, 2022

Guest speaker: Jessie-Lynn MacDonald
Self-Care: Beyond the Bubblebath

All meetings are virtual Zoom meetings from 7:30pm-9:00pm

If you would like to receive emails about our monthly meetings (always the first Tuesday of the month), please email Mary at maryjpike@hotmail.com and ask to be put on our email list.

A New Chapter: May Meeting

Our topic for the May meeting is, Microboards - Basic facts and Family Experiences.

When you ask the question, "Who will support my child with disabilities as I age and after I die?", one answer is a Microboard. A Microboard is a group of five or more people who assist someone to administer their life. You can find out more on this website: www.microboardsontario.com

This session will include a panel ready to answer all your questions and engage in conversation about Microboards.

The panel includes:

- Karen Bell, Executive Director of Microboards Ontario,
- Brendon Pooran, Lawyer and Chair of the Board of Directors, Microboards Ontario
- Kathleen Gifford, parent of someone with a Microboard
- Wendy Newbery, parent of someone with a Microboard

We will meet on Tuesday, May 3 from 7:30-9 pm on Zoom. As always, please rsvp to Mary Pike (maryjpike@hotmail.com) to receive the link for the meeting.

A reminder: We have added a new feature to our monthly meetings. This is a half-hour (9-9:30pm) session called Ask Us Anything where you can stay on the Zoom call to ask questions pertaining to the topic of the evening or any other questions you might have. Sue Furey, Family Resource Coach at WRFN and at least one other member of the ANC planning group will be available to respond to questions at this time.

What's Happening at WRFN



In case you missed it last month, we are excited to share that the WRFN office has moved to Waterloo!

You can now find us at KidsAbility's Waterloo site! Our new address is 500 Hallmark Drive, Waterloo, ON, N2K 3P5. If you'd like to reach us by phone, our numbers have stayed the same. You can find staff email addresses on our website here, too!

WRFN has been located within KidsAbility at The Family Centre in Kitchener for the past eight years providing many great opportunities for connections within KidsAbility and with other organizations. We've enjoyed creating many lasting friendships and partnerships during that time. We will continue to offer some support group programs and events at The Family Centre in the future and look forward to staying in touch.

What's Happening at WRFN

Ask A Self-Advocate

Do you need to look at a challenge you are facing with a new perspective? Would you like to bounce ideas off someone who's been there? Cristina was diagnosed with exceptionalities as an adult, and is passionate about sharing her lived experience. Speak with Cristina to discuss your own questions and concerns to gain new insights and ideas. This program is open to individuals with disabilities, families, or service providers.

For more information on Ask A Self-Advocate please contact Cristina Stanger at Cristina.Stanger@wrfn.info.

Parent Mentor Program

Through our Parent Mentor Program, we provide a means for parents to connect with each other, as well as guide, support and help empower each other to work through the highs and lows that make up their journeys.

Our Parent Mentors provide information and emotional support; share ideas and strategies; and connect their mentees with community resources.

Learn more about our Parent Mentor Program [here](#).

School-Issue Parent Support Group

This peer-led group provides support, advice and a safe environment for parents who have questions or concerns about school issues affecting their children with special needs. The WRFN School Issues Support Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month.

For more information, please contact Sue.Simpson at Sue.simpson@wrfn.info.

WRFN's Family Resource Coach Team

During this current COVID-19 health crisis, personal support has become paramount for many families. Erin Sutherland and Sue Furey, our Family Resource Coaches, are available by phone, email, or virtual call to lend a helping hand and personal guidance to families and to connect you to updated information, resources, and virtual opportunities.

Call Erin Sutherland at 226-808-5460 or email Erin.Sutherland@wrfn.info.

Call Sue at 226-898-9301 or email Sue.Furey@wrfn.info.

Coffee Club

Greetings from Coffee Club! We currently meet on Zoom, usually on Thursdays from 3:00-4:00 PM. Generally, we are just catching up and chatting, mixed with a little bit of watching YouTube.

If you would like to join us, please send me an email at carmen.sutherland@wrfn.info. I will make sure to keep you on the email list so that you receive a Zoom invite and I will also keep you aware if we ever change or add a meeting date.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Here at WRFN, we are community oriented and committed to connecting families to local events and learning opportunities.

The information provided in this newsletter is not a recommendation, referral or endorsement of any resource, therapeutic method, or service provider. You are urged to use independent judgement when considering any resource.

Inclusive Summer Camps

Adults in Motion Camps

Adults in Motion participants enjoy friendships, music, movement, learning new skills, special events, excursions and volunteering in the community. Join Adults in Motion for some summer days or choose full weeks that work for your schedule. Approx. age 16+. Virtual and in-person options available.

<https://adultsinmotion.org/programs/>

Camp Awakening

Camp Awakening focuses on outdoor recreation for children and youth with physical disabilities (ages 8-18). Kids are given the chance to increase independence, make lasting friendships, develop confidence and accomplish things they never thought possible. There is still space in the following areas:

- Boys Session 2 (ages 14-16): Friday, July 15 – Thursday, July 28
- Girls Session 2 (ages 14-16): Sunday, July 17 – Thursday, July 28
- Girls Session 3 (ages 13-15): Monday, August 1 – Saturday, August 13
- Leaders-in-Training (ages 18-24): Sunday, June 26 – Saturday, July 2 (please note: the LIT program is a hybrid camp beginning online at the end of May)

For more information, visit <https://campawakening.com/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Summer Camp Directory

If you missed out on the Virtual Camp Fairs that we held in partnership with KidsAbility, not to worry! KidsAbility has been collecting everything you need on its website.

For recordings of the previous sessions, please see the following links:

- Watch the [2022 Overnight Camp Fair](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Day Camps Fair for Children](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Camps for Teens & Adults Fair](#) video

KidsAbility also hosted Summer Camp Planning workshops to help families plan a successful summer camp experience for children with exceptionalities.

- Watch the [2022 Cambridge Summer Camp Planning Workshop](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Kitchener Waterloo Summer Camp Planning Workshop](#) video
- Watch the [2022 Guelph-Wellington Summer Camp Planning Workshop](#) video

To search through the Camp Directory for Summer 2022, please see the links below:

- [Overnight Summer Camps Across the Province – Children to Adults](#)
- [Day Camps for Children: Inclusive Day Camps \(age 4-12\)](#)
- [Day Camps, Programs, and Getaways for Teens and Adults](#)

Beechwood Brainery

Beechwood Brainery is offering inclusive camps at both its Cambridge & Waterloo locations this summer! There are part-time & full-time options available, spaces are limited. Age groups include Critters (ages 4-6), Explorers (ages 7-10), and Leaders (ages 11-14). Camp is \$350 per week per child. Please email info@bbrainery.ca for registration information & forms.

www.bbrainery.ca

Wilmot Family Resource Centre

Summer Camp 2022 is almost here! Join Wilmot Family Resource Centre's day camp for arts and crafts, science, group games, outdoor exploration. There's something for everyone with its energetic, outgoing and inclusive team! Camps run Monday to Friday from 9-4, but extended hour options are available. Registration opens February 14.

www.wilmotfamilyresourcecentre.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Programs & Recreation

EarlyON

Registration for May programming is now live at KEyON.ca. Pre-Registered interactive Drop-In is available at all in-person locations. Online programs continue to be offered through Zoom.

Specialty Programs in May:

- [Infant Massage](#)
- Make the Connection 0-1 ([Online](#)) ([In-Person](#))
- [Baby Connections](#)
- [Baby Connections @ Home](#)
- [Preparing for Parenthood](#)
- [Sleep and Your New Baby](#)
- [Parent Talk \(online\)](#)

Kinbridge Spring Activities

Kinbridge has a wide range of children and youth programming starting this May at their main location (200 Christopher Drive), the Christopher Champlain Resource Centre, and Southwood Resource Centre. Activities range from sports like badminton and dance, cooking classes and STEAM. There will also be FREE drop-in activity nights and adult activities, too! For details, please email info@kinbridge.ca.

See the Spring Activities Guide here: <https://www.kinbridge.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Kinbridge-Spring-Activities-Guide-FINAL.pdf>

Better Days, Better Nights

Does your child aged 4-12 years with a neurodevelopmental disorder have difficulties falling asleep and staying asleep? Better Nights, Better Days for Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders is a free online program based on behavioural principles that supports parents of children aged 4-12 years old with a neurodevelopmental disorder who experience difficulties falling and staying asleep. This online program encourages positive behaviours that will help children achieve a better quality and quantity of sleep throughout the night. To see if the program is a good fit for you and your child visit the website:

www.ndd.betternightsbetterdays.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Fun Fearless Females

Fun Fearless females is a social group to empower women of all abilities to live happy and healthy lives. Check out their May and June events:

- Dance it Out
 - May 6, 6:30-8:30 pm at West End Community Centre (21 Imperial Rd. S, Guelph)
- DIY Friendship Bracelets
 - May 13, 6:30-8:30 pm at West End Community Centre (21 Imperial Rd. S, Guelph)
- Movie Night ("Fly Away Home")
 - May 27, 6:30-8:30 pm at West End Community Centre (21 Imperial Rd. S, Guelph) in a new room (Lion's Lair)
- DIY Lanterns
 - June 3, 6:30-8:30 pm at West End Community Centre (21 Imperial Rd. S, Guelph)
- Starbucks by the River
 - June 24, 6:30-8:30 pm at Royal City Pare beside Starbucks (40 Wellington St W, Guelph)

Email lori@funfearlessfemales.ca to register. Spots are limited.

KidsAbility

From May 1 to 7, it's National Youth Week! KidsAbility is running two events and supporting an event being run in the City of Guelph.

- Trivia Night
 - Tuesday, May 3, 7-8 pm
 - [Youth Week Trivia Night! Tickets, Tue, 3 May 2022 at 7:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- Townhall Event
 - Thursday, May 5, 7-8 pm
 - [Youth Week Townhall! Tickets, Thu, 5 May 2022 at 7:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- Wheelchair Basketball
 - Westend Recreation Centre in Guelph. All are welcome. Free to participate.
 - Friday, May 6, 7-8 pm

For more information or questions about these event please contact: Lindsie Driver, Youth Engagement Lead at youthengagement@kidsability.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Post-Pandemic Support & Resiliency Program for Children & Youth

St. James Anglican Church is running a free community program that will support vulnerable children and youth (age 5-17) in processing and healing from challenges faced during the last two years. The program will utilize a variety of therapeutic approaches; visual art, movement, yoga, social support, talking, listening and learning. Register at <https://stjamesang.ca/events/>.

Brightside ABA Services

Transition to Highschool: July 12, 2022 - Aug 25, 2022 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-3 pm. For youth 13-15 years of age with a diagnosis of autism or intellectual disability. Topics include time management, working in groups, organizational skills, bullying, hygiene, and money handling.

Please apply by June 21, 2022. To register contact Lauren Harris at 519-894-6156 ext. 2904 or brightside@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Artshine Virtual Accessible Art For Kids, Teens & Adults

Social distancing doesn't need to rob you of the joy that comes from expanding your art skills! Artshine has live video lessons via Zoom for all ages. Art supplies will be mailed to you in advance of classes!

Maximum 20 participants for personalized attention.

[Click here for more information!](#)

Recreational Respite Virtual Services

Virtual group programs have been developed in partnership with participants to address a variety of interests, skill practice, goals and outcomes that promote inclusion, encourage community participation and nurture social connectivity. Visit the website for the May virtual group program calendar, for Children and Youth and Young Adults!

<https://bit.ly/30TF1YF>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Bridges to Belonging

BE-Friends: BE-Friends is a volunteer matching program that connects people with any disability 17 years or older (Friend) with a community volunteer "Buddy" (19 years or older). The pair gets together as often as they want, enjoy fun activities they choose and become part of each other's world. BE-Friends is a bridge to meaningful reciprocal relationships and lifelong friendships. People are being matched and friendships are blooming. We invite you to become part of this friendship adventure!

If you are 17 years old or older, living with a disability, and want someone to spend time and build a lasting friendship with, we invite you to [Click Here](#) and fill out an application to be matched with a Buddy Community Volunteer.

If you are 19 years old or older and want to create an authentic friendship as a Volunteer Buddy to a person with a disability and be part of their journey to living their best life, we invite you to [Click Here](#).

BE-Connected: Are you looking for a place to hang out and meet a great group of people who will always welcome you and celebrate who you are? Come join us on Wednesday nights here: from 7-8 P. M. at BE-Connected, a community where EVERYONE is welcome and belongs. The following is the Zoom information through May 18, 2022.

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81897785039?pwd=bkpEZklwdHZZOVI5WHJV1FobXpwUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 9778 5039

Passcode: 012889

LINKS Summer Workshop: July 11-12

<https://forms.gle/wzT7BWckvLG7au4y7>

March of Dimes Connect & Share

Wouldn't it be wonderful to visit with someone regularly who shares your interests? March of Dimes virtual Connect & Share program was designed to make that happen. You will be matched with a volunteer who shares your interests and your buddy will visit with you (as often as you like) – just for the fun of it.

You can have phone visits or you can have a video call using a platform like Zoom.

<https://bit.ly/3906Lfl>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Torchlight Service: Connect Virtual Adult Programming

Torchlight's Connect Program offers a variety of fun interactive activities for a small membership fee. The Virtual Program team assists and supports participants in resolving technical issues, basic education on how to access online programs, program schedules and reminders via email.

Learn more about the Connect Membership at <https://bit.ly/3x0Sd9A>.

CNIB's Virtual Program Offerings

Whether it's children and youth groups, employment workshops, tech sessions or book clubs, CNIB's innovative programs are designed to educate, entertain and engage! CNIB's free programs are available to Canadians who are blind or partially sighted as well as their families, friends and caregivers.

Visit their website to learn more: <https://bit.ly/38cRE1o>

ConnectABILITY's Friendly Connections

Friendly Connections is focused on helping its community and individuals of all ages with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, overcome isolation.

It aims to help improve the well-being of individuals through socializing and providing entertaining resources. Friendly Connections wants to connect with individuals across Canada through phone calls, video calls, emailing, messenger chats and good old fashion mail. They mail letters, postcards, colouring sheets, activity sheets, stickers and other fun goodies!

<https://connectability.ca/friendly-connections/>

Province-Wide Monthly Virtual Groups for Adults with FASD

The Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at ABLE2 is happy to announce the first two Province-wide virtual groups for adults living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). They include the FASD Educational Group and the FASD Social Group.

Both groups will be held monthly. You can participate at your comfort level from the comfort of your home.

For more info contact the Fetal Alcohol Resource Program at 613-761-9252 Ext. 234 or fasd@able2.org.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

You're invited to take a look at MOVE by GoodLife Kids!

MOVE is designed exclusively to get youth with special needs active, and is offered FREE to families. Registered participants get access to three live online small-group sessions each week led by one of MOVE's passionate coaches.

Learn more at: goodlifekids.com/MOVE/

Virtual Sensory Storytime

Join KPL for stories, games and songs during Sensory Storytime.

Children of all ages and abilities are welcome.

Registration is required: <https://bit.ly/3odj8NZ>

Kijengle

Kijengle Inclusive Music Education & Music Therapy is an innovative, creative, family-centred organization. They will continue to offer both in-person and virtual music and music therapy programs. Learn more at: kijengle.ca.

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region: Virtual Open Space

Looking to connect to folks on a weekly basis?

Join one of the virtual Open Spaces on Monday evenings! Both begin at 6:30pm.

Email Kim Sproul for more details at kim.sproul@eafwr.on.ca

Abilities Centre

Join the Abilities Centre for Virtually Together: You. Me. We. These sessions are designed for children of all ages to be physically active, socially interact with their peers, and have fun in a inclusive and supportive online environment. Virtually Together sessions run from 6-7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Participants are welcome to join any and all sessions, or drop in as they are able! Registration is free and no diagnosis is required- siblings and friends are welcome to join!

<https://bit.ly/3Mes536>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Workshops & Training

Partners for Planning (P4P)

Are you interested in learning about the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), a made-in-Canada, long-term savings vehicle designed specifically for individuals with disabilities? Then register for one of P4P's upcoming Intro to the RDSP webcasts.

- [Wednesday, May 18 at 12pm](#)
- [Monday, June 13 at 3pm](#)

[For more information about the RDSP be sure to check out the RDSP resources on the Planning Network.](#)

P4P Planning Network also has a variety of upcoming webcasts:

- *Early Planning Priorities for Parents with a Young Child with a Disability*
 - May 2 at 7 pm
 - The Early Planning Priorities Webcast is the first of two webcasts available in the Early Planning Toolkit and touches on those critical ideas you can focus on now that will impact your child's future. Dr. Peter Rosenbaum of the CanChild Centre at McMaster University shares his insights on the limitless potential of children with disabilities. Plus, two mothers of young children share advice on advocating, building a team, finding friends and transitioning to school.
- *Starting Strong in High School*
 - May 12 at 7 pm
 - Starting high school is a big transition for every student. If you have a child with a disability, you can help them get off to a good start with intentional planning and coordination. Learn about your role as a parent in transition planning with your child's school board and what you can do to help your child make the most of their high school career.
- *The Henson Trust*
 - May 26 at 7 pm
 - A Henson Trust can help you protect the financial well-being of your son or daughter with a disability, today and down the road. The Henson Trust works to protect ODSP benefits and also provides flexible estate planning options for families concerned about the future financial wellbeing of a loved one with a disability.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

P4P Planning Network Continued

- *Early Financial Planning for Parents of a Young Child with a Disability*
 - June 7 at 7 pm
 - This is the second webcast available in the Early Planning Toolkit. Learn about the financial resources and provincial and federal tax credits that you can access to help support your child throughout their life

You can access all these webcasts at

<https://www.planningnetwork.ca/#freeonlinewebcasts>

Halton Sexual Confidence Virtual Workshop

Developing Healthy Relationships & Sexual Awareness

This 6-week, virtual workshop provides opportunities to discuss sexuality in an open, light hearted way using visual, tactile and interactive learning strategies. It will foster communication about sexuality and relationships between adults with a developmental disability and the people who support them, all while providing tangible skills and materials to promote healthy sexuality. (1 hour weekly/6 weeks)
Starts May 4 – June 8, 1 -2 pm on Wednesdays.

Email kmatos@cwsds.ca to register.

Strong Minds Strong Kids

Fathers are parents too, and they matter for children's development

Why do fathers matter? A growing body of research shows that fathers make important and, in some cases, unique contributions to children's positive development. Fathers are, however, often forgotten when discussing child development and parent programs. This webinar explains how fathers matter for children's development and highlights the importance of including fathers in public discourse.

Host: Dr. Audrey-Ann Deneault | Date: May 4, 2022 12pm-1pm

[Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Wonder of Me

Join Wonder of Me, a 10-week FREE virtual course all about self exploration and expression. This course starts May 4 and runs Wednesdays at 1 -2:30 pm until July 6. To register, please contact Ashlyn Northfield at anorthfield@cwsds.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community Living Ontario Webinars

- *Supporting People to Have Choice and Control in Community-Based Housing*

There is a growing understanding that people supported by developmental service agencies can live in increasingly independent ways, and achieve greater health and quality of life as a result. In this session, we will learn about the individualized housing approaches taken by Community Living Algoma, and hear stories about people supported in by the organization in Ontario's northwest.

May 6, 2022 – 12 pm

<https://bit.ly/3vOVgSH>

- *Creating Partnerships to Support Transition-Age Youth*

Organizations across the province are finding that youth transitioning into adult developmental services are in need of intensive cross-sectoral supports. Many young adults are facing systems that simply don't meet their needs. As a result, they are experiencing a high risk of negative outcomes. Join us to learn how Community Living Thunder Bay, Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout, and the Kenora Association for Community Living are working with community partners to change the way transition-age youth are supported in ways that increase choice and control.

May 20, 2022 - 12 pm

<https://bit.ly/3Ko7OWv>

- *Supporting People who have a Developmental Disability to Age in Place*

More than 2,000 adults who have a developmental disability are living in long-term care facilities in Ontario, and nearly 600 are under age 60. The long-term care system often lacks the capacity to support people in this population. This session will feature organizations that are supporting people to age in homes of their choice, and that are drawing on resources from the health and elder care sectors to meet the changing needs of aging adults.

May 27, 2022 – 12 pm

<https://bit.ly/3LsokpT>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Extend-A-Family Conference: A Future of Hope, Relationships and Community

On May 13 and 14, Extend-A-Family is hosting a conference called A Future of Hope, Relationships and Community. The pandemic shone a spotlight on a reality that was all too familiar for many people with disabilities. Many are alone, isolated and left behind with few social relationships. How can we change this narrative and reality? How can we find hope as we slowly emerge from a time of isolation? At this year's DSP Conference, speakers will engage participants with practical solutions in helping those supported by EAF be noticed and known members of their communities.

Register at: <https://bit.ly/3vnuvWo>

Registration deadline: May 6

Bridges to Belonging Future Planning Workshop

On May 12, 2022, from 6:30-8:30 pm, learn about the important considerations and legal aspects of Advanced Care Planning. Dr. Sandy Shamon is a primary care physician, palliative care specialist, and sibling to her sister living with a disability. Dr. Shamon will provide insights and perspectives through both a personal and professional lens related to the Health Care Consent, Advanced Care Planning considerations and Advance Directives, Goals of Care Discussions, Substitute Decision Makers. David Amy is a Partner of Amy Appleby and Brennan Law Firm in Waterloo specializing in Wills, Estates, Trusts, and Henson Trust. David will provide legal expertise regarding, Capacity, Power of Attorney - Personal Care and Guardian and Trusteeship. Paul Arsenault CFP®, PFP® will also be on hand to answer any financial questions that may be related to advanced care planning.

2022 Symposium on Child & Youth Trauma

Join the 2022 Symposium on Child and Youth Trauma on May 18 and 19. The cost is \$150 for members and students, and \$200 for general admission. The event will be live and streamed online. The full symposium program is posted on the [Consortium portal](#), including Keynote speaker Dr. Sandra Bloom and a number of other exciting presentations.

On May 17, everyone also can participate in a pre-symposium presentation on the C.A.R.E. Parenting Program by Dr. Tina Montreuil and Rayna Edels, a hands-on workshop for parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and caregivers.

Please [register for the Symposium and C.A.R.E. Parenting Program here!](#) Group registrations can be made by contacting gabrielle.chapdelaine@mcgill.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Dufferin Wellington FASD 3rd Annual Conference

Dufferin Wellington FASD 3rd Annual Conference: Understanding and Supporting Mental Health and Wellness is taking place May 19 from 9 am – 4 pm. Tickets can be purchased by cheque payable to DCAFS, or by e-transfer to payments@dcafs.on.ca. For any questions, contact Amy Holmes at amy.holmes@dcafs.on.ca. NOTE: If you are a group registering, please register each person individually. Register at <https://conta.cc/3MEIcaF>

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Fundamentals for Caregivers

This is a 3-part Training for caregivers supporting individuals with FASD. Learn how FASD is a brain and whole-body disorder, how it impacts behaviour with a focus on executive and adaptive functioning and identify what is needed to support those living with FASD. There will also be a focus on local resources and supports available to families. Sessions take place on June 2, 9, and 16 at 6:30 pm to 8 pm on Zoom. If you're interested, register with Michelle Hughes, FASD Coordinator at m.hughes@sunbeamcommunity.ca.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Resources

Doctors Answer Self-advocates' Questions About COVID-19

Do you have questions about COVID-19 as we head into spring? Watch as Azrieli advisors ask their questions about COVID-19 and Drs. Jiwa, Lunsky, and Niel give their answers to questions such as: "If so many people have their vaccine, why is there another COVID wave?", "How do I stay safe around someone who doesn't have the vaccine?" and "How do I cope now that there are fewer COVID rules?".

[COVID-19 Question & Answer \(Spring 2022\) - YouTube](#)

The Value of an Experiential Learning Model for Family Medicine Residents

Disability and Health Journal by Selick, et al.

Members of the H-CARDD program looked at why it is important to give family medicine residents hands-on training instead of just lecture-type teaching when it comes to developmental disabilities by comparing residents' knowledge, comfort, and skills based on the type of learning received. They conclude that it is time to not only invest in more teaching about this population but also to consider how the teaching is done.

<https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S1936657422000152>

Mental Health and Well-being of Adults with IDD during COVID: A Narrative Review

Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities by Lunsky, et al.

This review article summarizes what is known internationally about the mental health of adults with intellectual disabilities during COVID-19, from multiple perspectives. It also explores various efforts to prevent or treat mental health difficulties with this group and makes some suggestions about what needs to be considered during pandemic recovery.

<https://bit.ly/3DIOibk>

System Navigator Anti-Black Racism for WRDSB

Phyllis Peprah is the System Navigator for the Waterloo District School Board. In this role Phyllis is dedicated to building trust between African, Caribbean and Black Students and Families and WRDSB. Phyllis is seeking to engage African, Caribbean and Black families living in Cambridge who may not be well connected to resources and supports in the community. phyllis_peprah@wrdsb.ca 519 570 0003 ext. 4270

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Family Alliance Ontario

Despite the unknowns, we can take steps. It's time to help your loved one live their best life, now, and in the future. No need to travel this road alone —especially as Covid carries on. We can share ideas, advice and support with like-minded families. What are some Covid-friendly ways that your family can connect with other families? Check out the fifth and final action guide in our Managing the New Normal series to learn more.

Managing The New Normal Action Guide Here: [Connecting to Family Networks and Supportive Relationships](#)

DON'T FORGET TO READ:

[Action Guide One: Moving Beyond the Pandemic](#)

[Action Guide Two: Staying Healthy and Motivated](#)

[Action Guide Three: Reconnecting with Friends and Family](#)

[Action Guide Four: Opportunities to Get Involved](#)

Resources from Inclusion Canada

Pathways to Home Ownership — The Pathways to Homeownership outlines an inclusive model of homeownership and provides solutions to the problems faced by people with intellectual disabilities when buying their own house as well as resources to navigate the process.

[Learn more here: https://bit.ly/3B4n0E2.](https://bit.ly/3B4n0E2)

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

CCRW Employment Services help job seekers with disabilities get connected with local businesses. They provide industry-specific training, workplace accommodation and adjustment planning, employer matching, and access to a hidden job market.

For more information or to register, call: Jennie Di Girolamo – Employment Facilitator (519) 571 6788 ext. 7661 | jdigirolamo@ccrw.org

<https://www.ccrw.org/>

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO)

You've applied to DSO - now what? While you're waiting for Ministry-funded services, here are some things you can do.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tveyIWXAY>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The Family Support Network for Employment

FSNE is proud to announce the launch of the “Learning Path to Employment,” an online course designed for families of individuals with a developmental disability. The goal of the course is to provide individuals and their families with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for, and secure, meaningful paid employment. The course can be found here: <https://fsne.ca/courses/learning-path-to-employment/>. The course can be accessed 24/7, is free, and there is no time limit in which you must complete it.

You Don't Have to Do this Alone - Parents for Children's Mental Health

If you are a parent/caregiver worried about your child, or a young person looking for help yourself – please reach out. Our network of child and youth mental health centres has 4,000 professionals ready to help children, youth and families with free counselling and treatment. We provide care in person, on the phone and virtually. No problem is too big or small.

Find your closest child and youth mental health centre here:

<https://www.family.cmho.org/>

March of Dimes Hi, Tech!

If you have a disability and are 18 years or older, you are eligible to be matched with a tech support coach. Your coach will answer your technology questions and help get you set up.

To learn more visit shorturl.at/yEGK3.

Take5

Take5 is an online space for children and youth in foster care, in group homes, or living away from their parents in Ontario. On Take5 you can find information for your age on things like: coping with stress, stuff about your identity and culture, relationships, and who to ask for help. You can also find activities, podcasts, videos and online events. Take5 is for children 6 to 12 and youth 13 and above.

Visit the [Take5 website](#).

Shared Connections: Inclusive and Accessible Tech Support

Shared Connections can help you get connected, finding & adapting technologies to meet your unique needs. Shared Connections is a non-profit committed to inclusion for people with multiple disabilities.

www.sharedconnections.ca

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The Vulnerable Persons Registry

The Vulnerable Persons Registry promotes communication between vulnerable persons, the people who support them and the police. This information will assist officers when responding to an emergency involving the vulnerable individual. The registry provides quick access to critical information about a registered person, such as who to call in an emergency, a detailed physical description, and any particular sensitivities that the person may experience.

www.vulnerablepersonsregistry.ca

KidsAbility Resources

Foundational Family Supports — KidsAbility provides Foundational Family Services to anyone in the community — no diagnosis needed. Staff will work with you to find workshops, resources, groups, support and more to help you be successful. You do not need to be a KidsAbility family to access these services. Learn more about this support at <https://kidsability.ca/foundational-services>.

ConnectAbility.ca COVID-19 Resources

Supporting individuals, families and caregivers.

Find answers to your COVID-19 questions, share experiences and discover events to stay active and connected. Visit <https://connectability.ca/covid-19/>

Family Compass Waterloo Region

Family Compass Waterloo Region is a central website to guide families to services for children, youth, and families in our community. The website offers the option to find information about general services for children and youth as well as specialized services that can help to address developmental concerns.

Family Compass has added a page specifically pertaining COVID-19 resources for children, youth, and families. It can be reached at <https://bit.ly/3t0lkar>.

Fostering Information from Family & Children Services

Are you interested in learning more about fostering? For general information about fostering, please visit <https://www.facswaterloo.org/foster>.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Ontario Caregiver Association

- *SCALE Program: Caregiver Needs and Well-being*: [SCALE \(Supporting Caregiver Awareness, Learning and Empowerment\)](#) focuses on topics relevant to new or experienced caregivers, including caregiver stress, managing feelings of anxiety or guilt, and self-care for the caregiver. Registration is required.
- *Caregiver 101*: Learn about caregiving roles, conflicts in caregiving, caregiver burnout, what to expect, developing resilience, and what supports are available. Access the online course [here](#).
- *Young Caregivers Connect*: Young Caregivers Connect is a website to help young caregivers aged 15-25. The website was designed in collaboration with, and for, young caregivers and offers information and resources and a way to connect that address their unique needs. Visit the website [here](#).
- *Time to Talk Podcast*: Join Host Michelle Jobin along with experts and caregivers, to discuss things that matter most to caregivers. Access the podcast [here](#).

CNIB Scholarships & Awards

Every year, CNIB's scholarship program awards multiple scholarships, bursaries and other awards to people who are blind or partially sighted in recognition of their educational aspirations and achievements.

[Click here](#) to learn more about these opportunities and to apply.

Safe Voluntary Isolation Site

A safe place for you to stay to help you rest and recover, and to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within your home and in the community. There are no costs to you.

To learn more visit: regionofwaterloo.ca/IsolationSite

Email: safeisolation@regionofwaterloo.ca

Health Care Access Research and Developmental Disabilities — How to Stay Safe, Well and Connected

There is lots of talk right now about COVID-19 or the Coronavirus. We may come across lots of information out there, but it is not always easy to understand and it can be confusing. This page has resources from around the world and information to support people with developmental disabilities and their families during this time.

<https://bit.ly/3hWruX8>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Support Groups

Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society (WWDSS)

The Mothers' Connection group is a great opportunity for moms who have a child with Down syndrome (age 6 and under) to share celebrations, struggles, goals, practical information, and resources with one another. The program runs monthly, every second Wednesday at 1:30pm (currently online). WWDSS also offers a Mom's Night Out and Dad's Night Out program for parents to connect and support one another. For more information please email info@wwdss.ca.

Transgender Partners and Friends Peer Support Group

The Partners, Family and Friends of Transgender Folks Peer Support Group is a support group for non-transgender folks in the orbit of transgender folks where they can discuss their challenges and build community and solutions. Participants are welcome to share or simply listen and learn from the experiences and perspectives of others. The group meets on the second Wednesday of each month. Please request access information by emailing trans@ourspectrum.com.

PFLAG Waterloo, Wellington & Perth Region (Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays)

The Waterloo Wellington Perth Chapter of PFLAG invites you to attend our support group focusing on topics of interest to parents, family and friends of LGBTQ individuals.

PFLAG Canada is Canada's only national organization that helps all Canadians with issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

More info at: <https://www.facebook.com/PFLAG.WWP/>

Chronic Pain Monthly Support Group

This groups is focused on discussing chronic pain coping strategies and how you can apply them in your life. Short mindfulness exercises will be included. Led by a facilitator who has experience with chronic pain. People can register anytime. Contact intaketeam@carizon.ca for more information or to register.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington

Preemie Parents of Waterloo-Wellington remains available online through a private Facebook group.

They look forward to returning to the Cambridge Family Early Years Centre and Our Place Family Resource and Early Years Centre as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. In the meantime, they suggest you review the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation's website to see the supports and resources available to you during this pandemic.

Visit: <https://www.cpbf-fbpc.org/covid19>

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support

Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support, formally known as The Black Parent & Caregiver Support Group (BPSG) was created to provide a safe space for families of African descent to come together to meet and connect, share resources, expertise and needs, inspire and support one another through our unique and often challenging and isolating journey of raising Black children or supporting a sibling, of any age, with a disability. Sawubona is a Zulu greeting. It literally means "I see you." More than words of politeness, sawubona carries the importance of recognizing the worth and dignity of each person.

Location/Meetings: This is a volunteer-run group that meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. via ZOOM. There will be guest speakers, resource sharing, support and mentorship opportunities for attendees.

Contact: For more details or to register, please contact us at bpsgroup2020@gmail.com.

Stork Secrets

Stork Secrets is a pregnancy and postpartum adjustment peer support group from Our Place. If you're feeling nervous, anxious or overwhelmed about parenthood, you are not alone. Stork Secrets is a place for support, discussing coping strategies, ask questions and develop friendships. To register, visit www.ourplace.ca/programs

Information, Opportunities & Resources

The A-Team of Waterloo Region

The A-Team of Waterloo Region is primarily run by individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, with some assistance from Bridges to Belonging. Their goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment to meet fellow adults (age 18+) with Asperger's Syndrome (ASD – level 1), discuss topics of interest, share experiences, and embrace their neurological diversity.

Please go to <https://ateamwaterlooregion.wordpress.com/about/> for more information on how to register and attend the upcoming virtual meetings!

Super Dads Super Kids

This is an online group for dads with children ages 0-6. Join the group to talk about what you think it means to be a dad. Learn ways to connect with your child.

Participate in fun activities with your child(ren). Started: January 13, 2021 When: Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 pm or Saturdays 9:30-10:30 am. Where: Zoom

Contact Roberto at capc@carizon.ca to register or for more information.

Groups from Muslim Social Services

Resilient Girls — Building young girls' resilience, self-esteem, networking skills and know how about family dynamics during COVID-19 related uncertain times. Ages 13-18.

Contact counsellor@muslimsocialserviceskw.org or call 519-772-4399 x 2707.

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario

The Association of Parent Support Groups in Ontario (APSGO) is for parents struggling with the behavior of a child, youth or young adult.

APSGO support groups help parents/guardians develop effective strategies, set limits and boundaries, and build better relationships with their children.

The group currently meets via Zoom on Wednesday at 7:15pm.

Contact Steve Keczem at 519-888-1053 or go to apsgo.ca for more information.

Strong Moms, Safe Kids

Strong Moms, Safe Kids is a program from KW Counselling for mothers who may have experienced abuse in intimate relationships. Interpreters can be provided for those not comfortable communicating in English. The group provides time for families to learn about the impact of abuse together, and also provides smaller groups for mothers, youth and younger children. If you are interested in talking about whether the Strong Moms, Safe Kids program is right for your family, please call 519-884-0000 and ask for the Strong Moms, Safe Kids Coordinator.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

South Asian Wellness Group

The South Asian Wellness Group is a drop-in group every Thursday from 3 pm to 4:30 pm. With a South Asian Peer Facilitator fluent in Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu, this group will focus on coping, recovery, and fostering hope from a South Asian lens. This group is intended for folks who identify as South Asian to connect and build community with one another. ALL Self Help & Peer Support groups are open to adults living in Waterloo Wellington communities who identify as living with mental health or/and substance use issues. To join this group or if you have questions about it, please send us an email: selfhelpgroup@cmhaww.ca. To view this information in Punjabi, [please click here](#).

Sharing and Caring FASD Support Group

This is a virtual speaker series and peer support group from SKHC's Four Directions Mental Wellness Program. All caregivers, individuals with FASD and their support persons are invited to share, learn and find support for their FASD journey. The next session takes place Wednesday, March 23 from 6 - 8 pm. Guest speakers include Zoe Higgins, SLP, and Kelly Oreskovich, MSW, RSW, *Building Social Skills, Building Resilience*. For more information and to register, please contact Kelly, FASD Coordinator at 705-675-1506 ext. 239 or email at koreskovich@skhc.ca.

Social Group for Adults (18+) with Aspergers and ASD level 1

There's an all-new group in Waterloo Region for adults (18+) with Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) level 1. The purpose of the group is to create a safe and supportive space for people to have fun, meet and connect with others, and take part in activities. Join if you're looking for a positive place of belonging!

Meetings take place at the Downtown Community Centre (35 B Weber Street West), in the Youth Room on the second floor. This is a drop-in group, so folks are welcome to join anytime between 5 and 7 pm. Parking passes are available at the front desk. Just mention you are joining the group in the Youth Room. In the case that the community centre doors are locked, please use the white button on the wall next to the left of the door labelled 'Main Office Buzzer' or call Kelly at the number below.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Kelly Groh at 519-731-3923. The next meeting is Thursday, May 12.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Engagement Opportunities

Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) Review of French as a Second Language Program

In 2017, the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) began a review of the French as a Second Language programs, including Core French, Extended French and French Immersion streams. They are now hosting sessions for public review and feedback.

Upcoming dates include:

- Thursday, May 5, 10-11 am
- Friday, May 6, 2-3 pm
- Friday, May 6, 3:30-4:30 pm

To learn more and see upcoming dates, please visit <http://ow.ly/4qVt50ISJVQ>

McMaster University Research on Postpartum Depression Treatment

McMaster University is conducting a research study to determine if women who receive an online peer-delivered CBT-Informed support for postpartum depression improve more than women who receive standard healthcare. You may be eligible if you are living in Southern Ontario, 18 yrs+ and have a baby under 12 months.

For more information please email: peercbt@mcmaster.ca

Every Canadian Counts (ECC) Call for Stories

The ECC has put out a call for stories from individuals living with disabilities across Canada. You can help by asking your supporters, contacts, family and/or friends to tell the personal stories that will convince policymakers and the wider Canadian public of the need for better services and supports. If you have stories of your own to share, please do. For more information about the stories project and how you can share your own stories please visit [here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

State of employment for individuals with a developmental disability in Ontario

Since 2018, the Family Support Network for Employment (FSNE) has been working to discover possibilities and advocate for needed transformations in the developmental services and employment system. FSNE is currently taking a survey on the state of employment for individuals with a disability in Ontario to fill the current gaps in knowledge on this topic. To participate, visit:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TS7ZJBJ>

University of Waterloo Cognitive Development Lab

The Lab has not been able to run in-person studies since the onset of COVID-19. However, the lab has developed studies that families can participate in remotely. It is now running a number of studies for children of a variety of ages (typically 40-60 minutes that involve interacting remotely with a researcher). All studies run by the Cognitive Development Lab are not for profit, are completely voluntary, and have been approved by a University of Waterloo Ethics Board. The studies are designed to be child-appropriate and engaging, and kids typically have fun participating.

Additional information about the lab can be found here: [Cognitive Development Lab](#) and information specifically about remote participation can be found here: [remote participation](#).

Health Care Access Research and Developmental Disabilities (HCARD)D

Research Study: Health for Adults with Developmental Disabilities during COVID-19:
A Virtual Course

This new research study is now recruiting participants. It is looking for adults 18+ with an intellectual and/or developmental disability (IDD), their families, and service providers from across Canada to help evaluate the impact of a 6-week online program exploring the physical and mental health needs of adults with IDD and strategies to address them. [Read about the study here](#). Interested? Fill out the [Expression of Interest and Collaboration Form](#), email hcardd@camh.ca or call 437-328-6761.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CAMH

- *Virtual Healthcare Study for Patients with Developmental Disabilities*

During COVID-19 there has been a huge increase in the delivery of virtual primary care. CAMH is conducting interviews (online or by phone) to learn what is working well and what needs to be improved to support high quality care for patients with developmental disabilities. Interested or want to learn more? Contact Avra Selick at avra.selick@camh.ca or 416-535-8501x30127

- *Survey on Accessible Information for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*

If you are an adult 18+ with an intellectual and/or developmental disability (IDD) or a caregiver of an adult with IDD, we want to hear from you. We want to understand how to make information from the Government more accessible and understandable.

Fill out the survey and you can enter a raffle for a prize. [Click here to find out more](#), email AIIDD@camh.ca or call 437-328-6761.

[Consent Form \(camhx.ca\)](#)

Advocacy Kit for Increasing Special Services at Home

People for Personalized Funding (PFPF) has created an advocacy kit for increasing Special Services at Home.

[Bulletin from PFPF about Special Services at Home](#)

[How to Take Action](#)

Use of Services for 0-6 Children by Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Infant Mental Health Promotion (IMHP) at the Hospital for Sick Children, in collaboration with the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health (The Centre), Kids Brain Health Network (KBHN) and Children First would like to hear your thoughts about how our child and youth mental health system can improve the quality of services for children under 6 throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn more at <https://bit.ly/39fKVFe>.

University of Guelph Child Emotion and Mental Health Lab

A Clinical Psychology PhD Student at the University of Guelph is researching parental self-efficacy, or how well a parent feels able to meet their child's needs, in parents of children with an autism spectrum disorder. They are asking for parent volunteers with a child who is 6-18 years old and has been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (including autistic disorder, Asperger's syndrome, or pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS)) are welcome to participate. This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board (REB# 21-05-012). To learn more and participate, [click here](#).

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Inclusion Canada

Family Matters: Job Loss & COVID-19 Findings Now Available

This project worked with families and self-advocates to better understand the impact of job loss during the pandemic and considerations for future supports for families and individuals. You can see the report and its findings here:

<https://inclusioncanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Final-Report-EN-Oct-27.pdf>

Accessibility Standards Canada

Accessibility Standards Canada has opened another public review of a third accessibility standard. In collaboration with CSA Group and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the draft updates for the draft standard ASC/CSA B652, Accessible Residential Homes has been finished.

This standard will assist:

- those who design, build, or modify homes for accessibility, and
- those who are seeking to provide affordable and adaptable homes for people with disabilities.

Public review of the draft standard is open until June 13, 2022. You can access the draft on the [CSA Group Public Review site](#). Select your preferred language from the menu in the top right.

A one-time registration is required. You are invited to comment directly online. For additional information or questions, please [email CSA Group](#).

French Message:

En collaboration avec le Groupe CSA et la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL), nous avons terminé l'ébauche de la norme ASC/CSA B652, Maisons résidentielles accessibles. Nous voulons maintenant connaître votre opinion.

Cette norme aidera :

- ceux qui conçoivent, construisent ou modifient des logements pour les rendre accessibles, et
- ceux qui cherchent à fournir des logements abordables et adaptables aux personnes en situation de handicap.

L'examen public du projet de norme aura lieu jusqu'au 13 juin 2022.

Vous pouvez accéder à l'ébauche sur [le site internet du Groupe CSA](#). Sélectionnez la langue de votre choix à partir du menu en haut à droite.

Une inscription unique est requise. Vous êtes invités à commenter directement en ligne. Nous sommes fiers de collaborer avec le Groupe CSA et SCHL pour contribuer à un Canada plus inclusif et sans obstacle.

Pour toute information ou question supplémentaire, veuillez contacter le Groupe CSA.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Breastfeeding Buddies (BFB)

BFB is looking for parents (in particular who speak another language, are new Canadians, those with mental health and addictions, LGBTQ2S+, single parents, BIPOC, youth, multiples etc) who have 6 months lived experience with breastfeeding, chest feeding and or pumping to join their volunteer team. BFB training is being held in-person May 12, 13, 14 (all 3 days are mandatory). As this is a volunteer opportunity, knowing how this stage of life can be busy, meals (light breakfast and lunch), transportation and financial support for childcare for all 3 days is offered. Please reach out for more info: 519 772-1016 and share this application link to those interested:

<https://www.breastfeedingbuddies.com/neve-home/about-services/volunteering/>

Psychology, Law and Neurodevelopment Research and Policy Group at U of G (PLAN)

PLAN is inviting youth and young adults between the ages of 12 and 24 with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) to participate in a study. Youth are eligible to participate whether they have had actual contact with the criminal justice system as our study asks about both hypothetical and real-world legal decisions. Youth will be asked to answer questions relevant to their own past experiences. To participate, youth must be able to speak English and must currently reside in Canada. Interested individuals can email: PLANLab@uoguelph.ca or call 519-824-4120 ext. 53622.

Information, Opportunities & Resources

Community News

Inclusion Canada – Budget 2022 Disability Inclusion Roundup

Disability inclusion made an appearance in Canada's budget released in early April. Inclusion Canada is pleased to see a financial commitment for a coordinated national employment strategy for persons with disabilities, for which our federation has been advocating for a long time. Some of the areas include employment, healthcare, and housing. The budget included a \$20 million commitment to continuing and expanding Inclusion Canada and the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance's Reading Willing and Able employment initiative.

Ontario teachers get new tool to promote disability inclusion

Project Inclusion is a learning resource for Ontario educators that's built around the voices and experiences of students with disabilities, their families, and school board staff. The website offers five learning modules on disability, accessibility and inclusion for staff working with students in kindergarten to Grade 12. It was created by Holland Bloorview and funded by the **Ontario Ministry of Education**. Over 300 students, parents and Ontario school board educators helped develop the content by taking part in interviews and a survey, and reviewing material. Two teachers from Bloorview School Authority narrated the modules and teams from Holland Bloorview worked together to craft and produce them.

[Ontario teachers get new tool to promote disability inclusion | Holland Bloorview](#)

[Project Inclusion | Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital](#)

Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region

Extend-A-Family is in urgent need of homes for its FamilyHome program which places people with exceptionalities in need of housing with a family sponsor. Providing a caring, stable home environment that promotes acceptance, a focus on dignity, and helping to create belonging are the foundations of FamilyHome.

<https://www.eafwr.on.ca/programs/familyhome/>

Information, Opportunities & Resources

CanFASD

In 2017, CanFASD developed a document intended to encourage consistency in how we talk and write about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Our Common Messages Guidelines have now been around for five years, and we regularly update them to reflect new research and information.

The revised 2022 Guidelines were just released. They include additions and updates related to:

- FASD and mental health statistics;
- Strengths-based language and healthy outcomes;
- Language around diagnosis;
- Using “may have FASD” instead of “suspected FASD”
- Reframing conversations around “won’t” vs “can’t” to focus more on how we can best provide supports; and
- Gender inclusive language

Read the [Full Document here](#)